



Benelux Meteor

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Quick Read

Belgium

Adult leaders needed

We desperately need your help to continue making Girl Scouting a valid opportunity for girls at SHAPE. More than 7,000 adults volunteer their time and talents to help enrich the lives of girls involved in USA Girl Scouts Overseas. You can be one of them. For more information, join us June 11, noon-1 p.m., in the American Community Conference Room, Building 318 on SHAPE. If you are unable to make this meeting or have other questions, please send an email to Shapegirlscouts@yahoo.com

Lose weight

SHAPE Healthcare Facility has a new program for those who would like to lose weight. Anyone interested in weighing in, sharing personal goals, and receiving support is invited to come to the second floor conference room each Friday, 9-9:30 a.m., beginning June 4. Being overweight contributes to health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and arthritis. If interested in ongoing assistance with efforts to have a healthy lifestyle and win the battle of the bulge, please come. Info: Rebecca Campbell, 065 44-5948.

Netherlands and Germany

Check out summer fun

Youth Services summer camp starts June 21 with morning and afternoon sessions. The camp offers a variety of field trips but kids must be registered to participate. Call DSN 364-3595 or 045 526-3595.

Get rid of your stuff

Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers sponsors a flea market June 5, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Schinnen Sports Center. Call 31 46 443-7236 to reserve a table.

Bargain shopping relocated

Schinnen Thrift Shop has moved to Building 24, the former Self Help Store, behind the Directorate of Public Works. Hours of operation are the same as before.

Chapel luncheon set

AFNorth Chapel Power Luncheons are back on track June 7, noon, in the ACS conference room.

BSB takes a break

The 254th BSB hosts a Friendship Day for employees June 11. Offices will be minimally manned that day. Please plan accordingly.

WWII P.O.W.



This former World War II prisoner of war was most likely held in this building in Bauffe after his B-17 was shot down over Chièvres Air Base. See page 2.

Bill Ramsey looks back

PHOTO: F. Neil Neeley

Airman survived B-17 downing, knifing in escape attempt, prison camp, forced march at WWII end

By Rick Haverinen

When a B-17 bomber named Skunkface was shot down over Chièvres Air Base during World War II, far-reaching events were set in motion that not only affected crewmembers of the aircraft, but shocked this area of Belgium when the navigator was summarily executed just for hiding from the Germans.

Bill Ramsey was a waist gunner on Skunkface when the plane was shot down. He survived that event, a knifing in an escape attempt, over a year in prison camps, and over 70 days during a forced march at the war's end.

Skunkface and its crew were assigned to 91st Bomb Group in Bassingbourn, England on Feb. 20, 1944 when it was returning from a raid over Leipzig, Germany, and got too close to four Focke-Wulfe 190s flown by Luftwaffe fighter pilots.

The attack was so severe that one engine on Skunkface was sheared from its mount and two others poured out oil.

The entire 10-man American crew parachuted out of Skunkface, which crashed in a field near Lens. One crewmember was killed by flak.

"When I came down I landed here in the airfield," Ramsey said.

"When I came through the clouds, I remember how quickly the ground came up, but when I looked down, they had all

these Army barracks at the airfield. All of them were lined with people holding their rifles pointed up at me. They were making sure I wasn't going to get away from them."

The Germans rounded up Ramsey and several other crew members and took them to a military police jail.

"There were five of us put in that guardhouse," Ramsey said. "We were there the first night and then the next day the navigator (2nd Lt. Billy Huish) turned to me and said, 'Let's escape because tomorrow they tell me they're going to take us over to a prison camp in Germany.'"

Ramsey talked to the other crewmen in the guardhouse and they agreed to help with the escape the next day.

"So I rapped on my bars and told (the guard) I needed to go to the toilet," Ramsey said, "and I walked out past him to the toilet and sat in there for a while and then came back out. And Billy the navigator said, 'Well, nothing ventured, nothing gained.' And I grabbed the guard around the neck with my arm and Billy started hitting him in the face with his fist, and finally he just fell on the floor. Billy had the keys. He got a couple of the cells unlocked, and I told him, there was a (German) army man in the guard house for some reason. I said he's out of his cell. And (Huish) said, 'Well, go get him.'"

Ramsey chased after the German Soldier who turned and threatened Ramsey with a knife.

"And I thought, 'Boy, I don't want any of this,' so I turned around and ran the other way," Ramsey said. "I told Billy, 'We've got to get out of here. This guy has a knife.' Billy had opened the cell doors, but all the fellows went back inside their cells and sat down. Billy and I continued trying to get out, and we got to the end of the hall and we could see (German) personnel coming at us. The door was chained loosely. And we got it open enough

that (Huish) could scoot out of it. He was a lot smaller than I was. So he scooted out and I tried to get through and couldn't do it."

(Read "Raid on hiding place led to murders of Airmen, Underground helpers" on Page 3 to learn the tragic fate suffered by Huish two months after his successful escape from Chièvres Air Base.)

The next thing Ramsey remembers was several Germans piling on top of him while one stabbed him four times.

"Finally they dragged me into the commandant's office," Ramsey said.

"Scream, I know the only way men in Germany got to be officers was from the amount of screaming they could do and how long they could keep it up. And he did a bunch of screaming to me. I just laid there in the floor."

The guard that Ramsey and Huish had overpowered came into the office.

"I felt awful," Ramsey said. "He was just a bloody mess. And he looked down at me and I thought, 'Oh my God, what did we do?' So they held their guns like they were going to take the stock of their guns and smash me into the floor but

they never did. For some reason they

decided to take me to the doctor."

Ramsey was grateful that the local Belgian doctor could speak English. He clipped up Ramsey's knife wounds and insisted Ramsey be wrapped in a blanket while taken on a truck to a hospital.

Ramsey was grateful that there was plenty of food at the hospital and finally he and other prisoners were taken by bus and then a several-day train journey in unheated freight cars to Stalag Luft III, a prisoner-of-war camp for flyers.

"We were there quite a while," Ramsey said, "and then they put us in another prison camp but I can't remember why. But they had dogs with them, and we stayed in line and close to everybody, with those dogs running up along each side of you. But then finally we could hear the guns of the Russians coming in. And we knew the war was about over because we heard that Normandy took place. We just assumed the Russians would come take over."

The Germans were loath to have many thousands of prisoners at the stalags or concentration camps set free, so generally the Nazi camps had their human contents force marched in an effort to avoid liberation by the Allies. The same fate befell Ramsey's stalag.

"The Germans took us out of the prison and marched us," Ramsey said. "We went on an 81-day march, right in the middle of the winter. The first night we slept in a barn. The farmer's hay was just laid back into the barn and that was very nice. Most generally we got into a barn. But one night we had marched all day long and it was rainy and we were all wet. Cold. And



we marched way into the night. And finally they said, 'You're here,' and we had to lay down in an open field. They gave each one of us a blanket and we put two of those blankets down on the ground and three of us got on it and folded the other ones we had over the top of us."

Ramsey said the prisoners didn't get much sleep that evening.

"Cold. But we got through the night and they marched us some more," Ramsey said. "We got clear over to the east side and the Allies were coming that way. And so they turned the group around and started marching us back again in the other direction."

Ramsey again started talking to other prisoners about escaping.

"Four of us were sitting on a bank along a road, and we just rolled over the bank down into a ditch," Ramsey said, "and the others got up and marched on."

"It was in the woods and it was an area where they had drainage ditches," Ramsey said. "I can't tell whether it was in Germany or in Holland, but it was up in that area someplace. And so we had one night they were shooting over

Bill Ramsey in 1945



PHOTO: F. Neil Neeley

Bill Ramsey is greeted April 19 on Chièvres Air Base by Robert Delespesse from Lens, who as a child saw Ramsey's downed B-17 bomber.

this way from us and these trees and limbs were just falling everywhere. And we got down in these ditches. We thought that was the safest place to be. We were there several days

Continued to next page

The wreckage of "Skunkface" fell from the sky Feb. 20, 1944 in Lens, after being shot down by German Luftwaffe over Chièvres Air Base. All ten crewmen, including Bill Ramsey and Billy Huish, parachuted out, but one man was killed by an antiaircraft round during his descent.

From previous page

in March and April. We thought the Americans were close by. We took an undershirt that was still white enough, and tied it on to a stick and we walked out of that marsh just waving that thing. We knew we were going west and that was where our troops were.

"And finally we came out in the open and there right in front of us was a whole line of tanks. They turned out to be a Scottish advance tank guard. And of course they had their rifles on us, but we got up there and told them who we were and they were tickled to death."

Ramsey said as the war started, he couldn't wait to be a part of it.

"That's the one secret, and I say it time and time again," Ramsey said, "there would be no war if you didn't have young men, 17, 18, 19, 20 years old, because all wars are fought with kids. It's because they think they're invincible. In fact, when I took my test in the States after we got to a base, why, there were all kinds of tests. Radio, tap-tap-tap, and that kind



Ernesto Serna, right, another "Skunkface" gunner, was with Ramsey throughout their captivity and their escape from the forced march.

of thing. When I got done, a guy sat down with me and said, 'Well, you're qualified for anything you want to do.' And I said, 'I want to get in the war as quick as I can and I want to fly.' And he said, 'Well, you were made to be a gunner.' So that's what I got. But I looked forward to it, I really did."

Ramsey was introduced to a roomful of admirers April 19 on Chièvres Air Base, 60 years and two months after he had been shot down over the same place. The occasion was to name a conference room at 309th Airlift Squadron in his honor.

"When I read his story, it reminded me of Article Six of the Code of Conduct, even though the Code had not been formally written until many years later," said 309th Commander Lt. Col. Robert Jacobson of Ramsey. "But you read his story, and where the Code of Conduct says, 'I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, dedicated to my principles which make my country free.' That sums up his ordeal perfectly."

"One of the most wonderful times of

my life was in 1999 when I came back to this base and the way people treated me as a hero," Ramsey told his audience of Air Force and Army members. "I am not a hero. And I know that trip made a new start for me because I could come to grips with what had happened. But I did no more than you people are doing. You people are doing the things to keep our country safe and we salute you. Thank you very much."

Ramsey's son Richard said that his father's re-immersion into the places he was during the war years has made him much more open about a subject he never seemed comfortable talking about.

"You'd ask him a question, he'd give you the answer," Richard Ramsey said. "It was just never anything he talked about until he came back in 1999. Since then is really when I've heard about most of his experiences. He talked about the last time he was here and had problems with getting choked up when he was trying to talk. And honestly it does the same thing to me, when I see the people talking to him and how much respect and honor they're giving him. It just really makes me feel so good."

Raid on hiding place led to murders of Airmen, Underground helpers

By Tom Larscheid

The American flyers marked for untimely death came from four B-17 bomber crews of the 8th Army Air Force (AAF). Nicknamed Woman's Home Companion, Rationed Passion, Susan Ruth and Skunkface, the Flying Fortresses met their doom over Europe in late 1943 and early 1944 trying to knock out Hitler's air force - (Luftwaffe) before the invasion of France set for June.

Some crewmembers were killed in action while the others managed to bail out of their stricken aircraft. They landed in Belgium, France and the Netherlands where most were quickly rounded up by German occupation troops.

With the exception of 2nd Lt. Billy Huish from Skunkface, who managed to break out of a German military police jail on Chièvres Air Base the night he was captured, the others managed to evade the Germans. They were hidden by Belgian and French Underground units at various locations until they could be returned to England.

Eventually, Sgt. John Pindroch, Sgt. Vincent Reese, Tech Sgt. Charles Nichols, Tech Sgt. Orian Owens, Staff Sgt. John Gramborski, Staff Sgt. Warren Cole, 1st Lt. Ivan Glaze, 2nd Lt. Robert Benninger, 2nd Lt. George Eike and Huish found themselves crowded together in a small windowless mud hut deep in the woods outside the village of Saint Remy. It was considered a temporary safe house after another one in the area was raided in February by Nazi and Belgian SS. The flyers were told it would take some time to reestablish the then-comprised network.

While arrangements were made to move them towards the French coast or Spanish border, the men had little to do but wait and try to keep warm. They soon built a better "cottage" about a half-mile from the mud hut and added a fireplace. Cole and Glaze didn't want to wait any longer and struck out on their own in March for Spain. They eventually made it to freedom, but those who remained behind soon would be betrayed.

On April 19 at a meeting in Charleroi chaired by Belgian turncoat Charles Lambinon, head of the Belgian secret service, it was decided to cordon off Saint Remy and Chimay to round up the "terrorists" informants had told him were in the woods. Lambinon or-

ganized a large force of 1,500 men, mostly German and Belgian Waffen SS.

At 5 a.m. on April 22, the rumble of heavy trucks passing through Saint Remy awakened Fernand Delporte, the district leader of the local Underground. He looked out the window and saw military trucks packed with heavily-armed soldiers. He attempted to phone members of the Underground but the line had been cut.

Helpless, Delporte fled to the woods and hid until the raid was over. Surprise was complete.

Thirty-three Belgians were rounded up as hostages from the twin villages, and after a brief burst of automatic rifle fire, the flyers marched from the hut. Two Belgians, Joseph Simon and Henry Fontaine, who brought food to the Americans every day, were also captured at the hut. Their kindness would cost them their lives.

The Americans were taken by truck to the Chimay schoolhouse for interrogation. About three hours later, the Americans were trucked back to where they had been captured and, inexplicably, executed. There was no trial, no firing squad; they were all shot in the back or in the nape of the neck. The question is, why?

It is theorized that the Gestapo thought these young airmen were connected with the killing of a German soldier near Chimay by the French Underground (Maquis) an hour before the raid began. The Nazis also found three weapons inside the hut, and seven of the Americans were dressed in civilian clothing and carried false identity papers. Perhaps this evidence was enough proof for them to execute the flyers as either saboteurs or as a reprisal.

In 1946, 26 Germans and Belgians who were involved in the raid were questioned, but only one, Jacques LeFevre, was sentenced to death for his actions. Records are incomplete and it is not known if the sentence was carried out. Others were said to have been tried but no information has been found.

In April 1999 a memorial to the eight Americans and two Belgians was dedicated at a small chapel not far from where the men were captured.

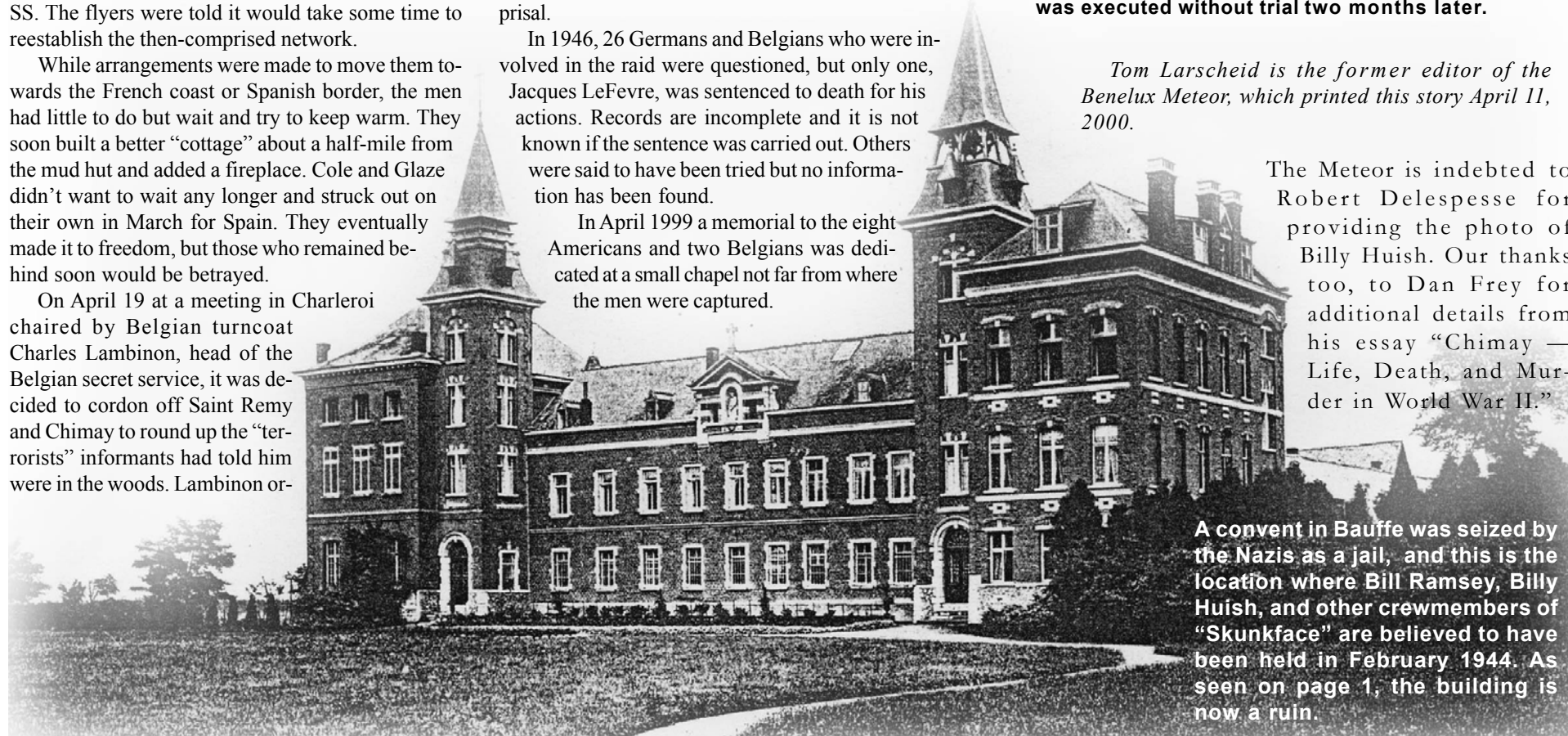


Although he was able to escape from Chièvres Air Base the day he was shot down, 2nd Lt. Billy Huish was executed without trial two months later.

Tom Larscheid is the former editor of the Benelux Meteor, which printed this story April 11, 2000.

The Meteor is indebted to Robert Delespesse for providing the photo of Billy Huish. Our thanks too, to Dan Frey for additional details from his essay "Chimay — Life, Death, and Murder in World War II."

A convent in Bauffe was seized by the Nazis as a jail, and this is the location where Bill Ramsey, Billy Huish, and other crewmembers of "Skunkface" are believed to have been held in February 1944. As seen on page 1, the building is now a ruin.



Val Dieu is nearby travel destination

By Jan Maessen

How about doing something different on a Sunday? Try a drive through the hills of Limburg and the Belgian "Voerstreek." Ready?

The abbey of Val Dieu is well named because it means God's valley and it really seems like God put extra effort into creating this beautiful place.

My wife and I and some friends decided to venture out one Sunday in early spring. We started from Brunssum and went through Heerlen in the direction of Vaals. We drove through the towns of Wittem and Gulpen to Reijmerstok. In Reijmerstok we headed towards "De Planck", which used to be the border crossing to Belgium.

We continued and followed the signs to the town of Aubel. As soon as we hit the center of Aubel we started seeing signs for "L'Abbaie de Val Dieu" and just followed the signs for about five or six kilometers to the abbey.

The magnificent Cistercian abbey dates from 1216 and is worth a visit. Monks still reside there who make several regional dishes and brew beer. In the Abbey's small restaurant visitors can sample the delicious cheese, sausages, beer, and other dishes for a reasonable price. And if you really like the taste of it, you can buy some to take home.

But beside the tasty treats and beautiful abbey, the area is also great and inviting for a walk. A large information board near the bridge displays several walking tours and the length of time each takes.

For those who have trouble with directions, each tour is color coded and all visitors have to do is follow the color signs for the route they've chosen. My group decided to take the red tour which started by heading right after leaving the church. We walked past the watermill, went through a small gate and just followed the path. As we strolled through the beautiful countryside you had to pay attention to the signs. Our walk took us through gates, pastures and up through steep grasslands. Once at the top of the hill, the panoramic view of the Abbey and its surrounding lands is breathtaking. We continued on our tour and walked past a farm house and ended up on a paved road. At this point we turned right at an intersection and decided to follow the green tour.

This led us into a small village where we found there were no signs so we had to pay close attention to where we were going. After about 100 meters, we went through a small swinging gate right behind a house which again brought us to pasture lands, and more climbing. By following this route we hooked up to the red tour again. Along the climb there were rest stations with benches for weary travelers. We passed a beekeeper which will make an interesting stop on another occasion.

The countryside is very beautiful and has charming buildings and farm scenes to be enjoyed.

Before we knew it we were heading back to the Abbey. On the way we passed more charming farm buildings and scenes. This is truly a worthwhile venture if you like

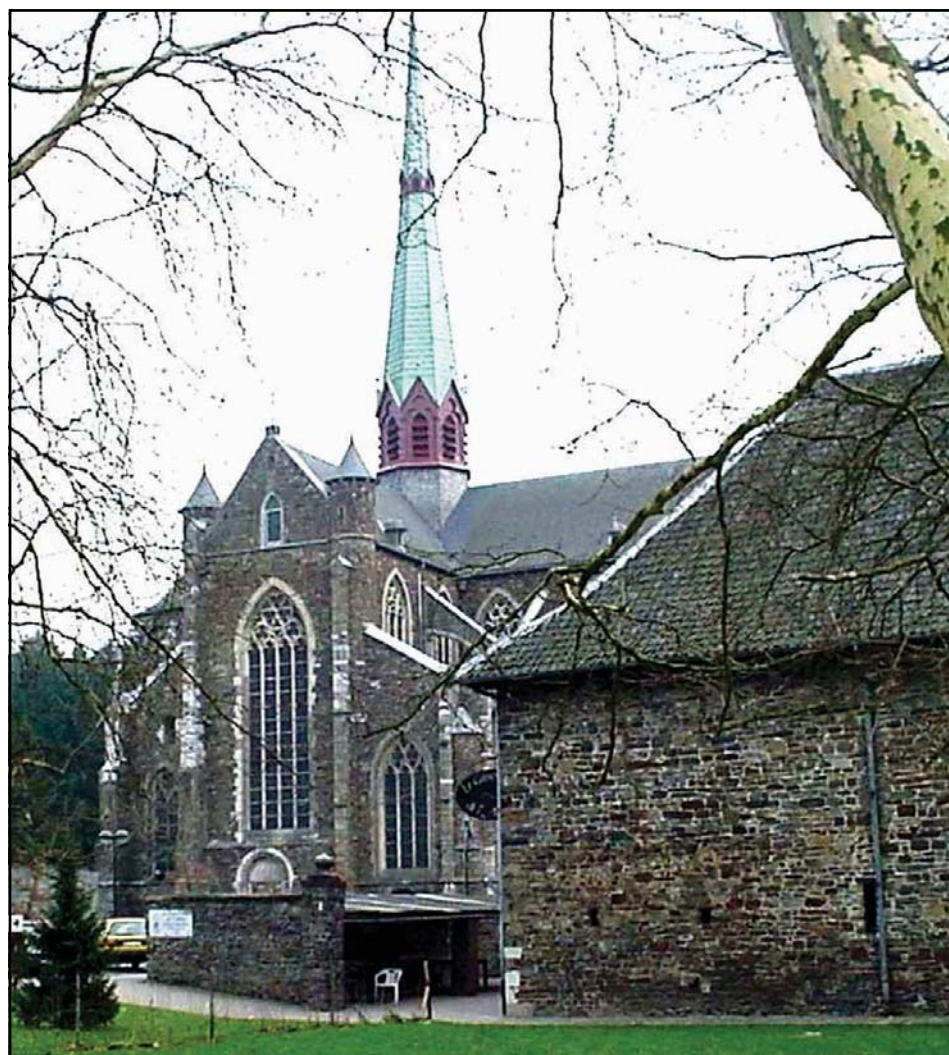


PHOTO: Jan Maessen

A visit to the beautiful Abbey of Val Dieu offers a day of relaxation close to nature.

walking. By Dutch standards, the walk is a short one of about five kilometers and the route took us through various types of ter-

rains and views. It's a perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon and a definite must for those who enjoy the outdoors.



PHOTO: Sandy Aubrey

Ambassador visits

The U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands visited AFNorth International School May 11. Ambassador Clifford M. Sobel was accompanied by Maj. Gen. Eldon Bargewell, senior U.S. military representative in The Netherlands. During the two-hour visit Sobel met with school officials and students. Over a typical lunch of sandwiches and fries, twelve AFNorth students joined the ambassador in the school cafeteria where they discussed political issues that affect Americans everywhere. The ambassador was interested in the students' opinion of what it's like to be an American student in an international school.

254th holds cultural event

By Sandy Aubrey

The Tri-border Special Emphasis Program committee put on yet another successful event May 18 to celebrate the diversity of culture and traditions in the United States.

The Asian Pacific American Heritage program was held in AFNorth School cafeteria and was attended by over 130 people who turned out for free food tasting and a great show that featured the "Aloha Polynesia" dancers.

Members of the Asian-Pacific community in the area pitched in to help prepare delicious dishes from different countries including a roasted pig, Philippine loempias, pansit (oriental glass noodles,) Malaysian and Chinese fried rice, Indian curry and Korean pulgoki and kimchi.

President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution in 1978 creating the celebration, which was expanded in 1990 when President George H.W. Bush designated May to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. May was chosen to mark the immigration of the first Japanese to the U.S. on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

Be cautious of hazardous effects of sun exposure

By Spec. Todd Goodman

We have this wonderful ball of fire millions of miles away in space that provides light and warmth and goes with tank tops and swimming. Unfortunately, it also goes with premature wrinkling and skin damage.

"There is no such thing as a safe tan," said Maj. Michael Bryan, chief of Dermatology at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. "So I tell (people) to get color from a bottle, not the sun."

Bryan said that a tan acts as a shield, laying down more color to protect from the sun's rays. However, over time and without protection, that shield will give way to

the sun's damaging rays.

Think wide-brimmed hats, long sleeved shirts and sunblock.

"I am a big proponent of hats, considering that 90 percent of our skin cancers form on the head and neck," Bryan said.

The shoulders and back have a high chance of burning due to the fact that they almost always are in the sun. One major sunburn can increase the risk of skin cancer by as much as 50 percent.

"Sunscreen is a great thing," said Major Bryan. "Unfortunately, we don't use enough or put it on as often as we should."

"And there is no sunscreen in the world

that is water or sweat proof," said Lieut. Col. Havard Albright, LRMC dermatologist. "It all washes off. You should apply it every two hours, and if you have been swimming, apply it every hour."

Albright also recommends that people perform regular self exams.

"Examine your body once a month," he said. "You should be looking for new moles or moles that have changed shape or color."

Although most skin cancer doesn't develop on moles, there is a chance of it happening.

Asymmetry, borders, color and diameter are things to look for. The mole should be

asymmetrical, meaning if it was cut in half, both sides would look alike. The borders of a mole should be smooth, not choppy. A change in color, either lighter or darker is a sign to get it checked. If the mole is bigger than a pencil's eraser, get it looked at.

To examine normal skin, look for a sore that won't heal or a spot of skin that bleeds on its own. These are two warning signs that should be checked immediately.

"I wish people who don't take this stuff seriously could spend one day when either Dr. Albright or I am doing surgery on someone's face to remove a skin cancer," Bryan said.

Authority is transferred at Combat Equipment Group, Europe in May 26 ceremony

EYGELSHOVEN, Netherlands—Management of Combat Equipment Group, Europe, a forward-based U.S. Army Materiel Command power projection platform, passed from Col. Robert Cox to Nicholas Mikus, Jr. in a 3 p.m. ceremony May 26 in Brunssum, The

Netherlands.

Mikus takes the reins after serving as the Group's Civilian Executive Assistant. In the newly created job of General Manager, he exercises control of more than 1,000 Soldiers and civilians at four operating locations throughout Europe.

With over 37 years of experience as a Soldier and Department of the Army civilian, he brings vast experience to the post. His assignment history includes a wide variety of field artillery and logistics-related command and staff positions. He is accompanied by his

wife, Sherry.

Cox is retiring to Manhattan, Kan., with his wife, Gloria, following 26 years of service. During his three-year tenure commanding AMC CEG-E, the unit successfully equipped Soldiers in the field in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as units

in the U.S. and ships at sea while reshaping the command.

With operations in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and Italy, AMC CEG-E provides the U.S. Army with combat-ready, prepositioned equipment and materiel ranging from tanks to toolboxes.

Communities celebrate those who help

Schinnen/254th BSB

When planning the Volunteer of the Year ceremony for 2004, Installation Volunteer Coordinator Teri Ryan asked 254th Base Support Bn. Commander Lt. Col. Deborah Broughton for a special venue, and Broughton approved the ceremony be held at Hoensbroek Castle in The Netherlands. Approximately 100 people attended the ceremony April 27. Speakers were AFNORTH Bn. Commander, Lt. Col. Angela Cummings and Nadya Hand, 80th Area Support Group Youth of the Year. Ryan presented to Broughton a symbolic check for all the money and hours that the community saved by all the volunteer work - 14,882 hours at a \$212,663.78 savings.

Sponsor of the Year was Lt. Col. Gabe Telles, who was nominated by a family he helped welcome to his community. "Upon our arrival, he personally escorted us as we moved like lightening through the various appointments, training, offices, etc., at GK, AFNORTH, and Schinnen... He superbly represented what the sponsorship program is all about," are some of the comments attributed to Telles.

Civilian Volunteer of the Year was Roy Ridder, Volunteer Program Manager of the Armed Forces Family Team Building Program. In June 2003, Ridder had accumulated

over 160 hours with ACS and Army Family Team Building.

Youth Volunteer of the Year was Theresa Lent, who served the 254th BSB Chaplain's office as a religious education instructor, youth chaperone, and usher. Her primary volunteer role was as a sixth grade teacher with the religious education program. Lent

where she has participated in numerous activities such as the Fourth of July Independence Day Celebration, End of Summer Jam, PCS Flea Market and Parent Appreciation Night. She volunteers on her free days to mentor at the Youth Center. Birdsong gave young people a chance to talk about things going on in their lives



Broderbund

assisted in a variety of social recreational programs, including field trips and awareness workshops for young children.

Military Volunteer of the Year was Gina Birdsong, who accumulated 265 volunteer hours from April 1 last year. She is a representative of the Better Opportunities for Single Service members (BOSS) Program

and to let them know that she is there to listen and provide support.

Family Member Volunteer of the Year was Julie Holmquist. Her nomination stated, "In the last month, she spent over 95 hours making our neighborhood a nicer place to live." Holmquist served as a Girl Scout leader to Brownie Troop 4. She also helps

the Boy Scout and Cub Scout programs. Holmquist is an active member of the American Spouses Club and was in charge of crafts for the Christmas Bazaar. She served as a delegate for the Army Family Action Plan conference.

Volunteer Family of the Year is the Scott Family, Mike, Carol, Elizabeth, Michael, and Katie. Mike is the high school CCD teacher for the AFNORTH Catholic community, and is also secretary for the Parish Council. He also volunteers time with the Boy Scouts and is currently organizing an extra activity for Catholic Boy and Girl Scouts. Mike organized the Single Soldier and Deployed Spouses Thanksgiving dinner.

Carol is also a CCD teacher for the AFNORTH Catholic Community. She is a very active member in the American Spouse Club, in which she helps to plan and organize the meetings. She also volunteers at the AFNORTH International School helping in the classroom and on fieldtrips.

Daughter Elizabeth is an active member of the Catholic congregation. She volunteers as an Altar Server. She is also a freshman honor roll student at AFNORTH International School and a cheerleader. The family has volunteered more than 20 hours a month at the chapel.

SHAPE/Chièvres

By F. Neil Neeley

Members of the SHAPE and Chièvres communities gathered May 25 at Hotel Maisières for a volunteer appreciation luncheon.

Although only five were chosen as volunteers of the year in their respective categories, many more were recognized for their community service. Forty volunteers received "Star" certificates thanking them for their service.



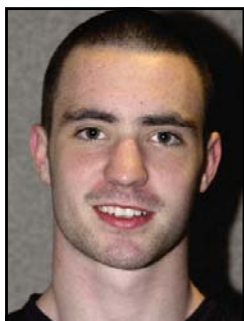
O'Meara

Some of the prizes awarded to the top volunteers included AAFES gift certificates, a Savings Bond and a \$1,000 gift voucher from a furniture store.

Cathy O'Meara was named Volunteer of the Year. O'Meara has logged more than 1,900 hours this past year, most focusing on the SHAPE community's youth, such as helping Boy Scout Troop 325, supervising the SHAPE Chapel Youth Service Project and especially working with Club Beyond. She has been recognized as one of SHAPE's Outstanding Women, and has served as photographer with the SHAPE football, wrestling and baseball teams.

Youth volunteer of the year Michael Kelleher contributed over 500 hours helping an orphanage in Lithuania. He helped set up the Fourth of July celebration on S.H.A.P.E. and has been active with Red Cross sponsored events.

Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Scheide Jr. was named the military volunteer of the year. Scheide has logged more than 2,000 hours this past year, most of which was at SHAPE Entertainment Centre. Scheide also volunteers at various SHAPE American High School productions, SHAPE Inter-



Kelleher

national Band, American Red Cross, SHAPE Enlisted Association, SHAPE Catholic Community Parish Council, and Fun Fest.

Royal Air Force Sgt. Kevin Redgate was selected as the International Volunteer of the Year logging more than 800 hours in the past year for the Fun Fest, Remembrance

Day ceremonies, SHAPE American High School's drama club, and as a sound engineer and production specialist at SHAPE Entertainment Centre.

Craig and Bonnie Larsen and children Amy and Chad were named Volunteer Family of the Year. Their volunteer contributions have been performed both individually and as a family and total more than 1,026 hours.



Scheide

playing violin within the SHAPE community and for the International Baptist Church. He assists in coaching the 11-and-under soccer team, creates the informative Monthly

Bonnie has supported Child and Youth Services and SHAPE American High School. As a member of SHAPE Booster Club, she championed the Campbell's Soup label fundraising project for the school, brought care packages to the homebound, and delivered necessities for community events and meetings at Child and Youth Services.

Craig has given many hours playing violin within the SHAPE community and for the International Baptist Church. He assists in coaching the 11-and-under soccer team, creates the informative Monthly

Events Newsletter.

Chad has volunteered to provide lawn maintenance at the International Baptist Church, is water boy for the football team, and provided assistance in the Booster Club Snack Bar and bake sales.



Bonnie and Lt. Col. Craig Larsen

Group commander, thanked the audience for their dedication and service to the community.

"Truly you are making a life while many of us are make a living," Quinn said. "Most commanders in communities in ceremonies like this are presented a check by the volunteer coordinator that calculates the total salary dollars we would have to pay all of the volunteers as employees. The number is always dramatic, but I don't believe that is why you give of yourselves. It is not because of the large sum of money



Redgate

printed on a check but it is an immeasurable sum of love that is beating in your hearts."

Amy has volunteered in the church nursery, provided baby-sitting and pet-sitting free of charge to families in need. she works on fund raisers and bake sales, as well.

At the close of the ceremony, Col. Timothy Quinn, 80th Area Support

Brussels/NSA

By Emmy Isbell

"NSA Volunteers Are Stars" was the theme for the 2004 NATO Support Activity Volunteer Recognition Ceremony May 21 at the Three Star Lounge. Approximately 125 volunteers and dignitaries gathered to recognize the outstanding volunteers of the Brussels American Community. Lt. Gen. Timothy A. Kinnan, Military Representative to NATO, addressed the volunteers and congratulated them on more than 34,500 hours of service this year. This number is probably low as many organizations did not record hours.

This year, Kinnan presented two top awards. Volunteer Family of the Year was

presented to the Andrew Cox family including Andy, Vicky and Kyle Cox. NSA Volunteer of the Year was presented to Kristine Oppenheim.

Oppenheim had 723 hours volunteered in NSA Chapel, Catholic Religious Education Program, Girls Scouts, PTSO, Brussels American School, Youth Services Sports, NATO Bazaar, and NATO Health Clinic.

The Cox Family contributions are: Col. Andrew Cox- 270 hours in Club Beyond, the Full Gospel Service, Chapel, Vice-president BAS Boosters, Brussels American School; Vicky Cox- more than 470 hours in the Full Gospel Service, Chapel, NATO Bazaar vice-chairman, Boosters, Club Beyond, PWOC, Brussels American School, coordinator Sweethearts Banquet for

American Delegation NATO; and Kyle Cox - BAS Student Government, Student delegate to the School Improvement Program, Student delegate to AFAP, Full Gospel Service, Chapel, referee middle school sports program.

Several award presenters commented that Brussels American Community is unique in the number and the tremendous generosity of its volunteers. It was a privilege to recognize their service and thank them for their tremendous impact on our school and community.

Other awardees: Tender Heart - Dr. Tony Carmone, Keith Cox, Beth Bottesini, Brandy Humphrey, Wanda Humphrey, Vivian James, Mike Pain, Mary Pears, April Price; NSA At-Large - Debra

VanderHeyden, Monica Mariano and Maryanne Hunt; NSA Auto Craft Shop - David Jacobs, Army Community Service - Paula Stewart; Brussels American Community Choir - Susan Carol Woodson; Brussels American School - Crawford L. Burns; BAS Boosters - Donald N. Isbell; BAS PTSO - Amye Turner; Boy Scout Troop 457 - Tom McKinley; Brussels Consignment Shop - Kate Clark; Cub Scout Pack 457 - Scott Langdon; Family Readiness Group - Junet A. Vasquez Morgan; MCYM Club Beyond Support Group - Ellen Cleghorn; NATO Health Clinic - Kristine Oppenheim; NSA Chapel - Anita Beamon-Freeman; NSA Sports and Fitness - John Mullins; and YS Sports - Geoff Stoker.

Brussels Community Calendar

ACS (02/717-9783) Metro Madness class June 12, 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and June 25, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; Toddler Play Group every Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.-noon, CYS multi-purpose room; complimentary 2004 Flea Market Guide books now available; Contact ACS Financial Readiness Manager, 02/717-9698, for instructions regarding Belgian tax forms.

Outdoor Recreation (02/717-9775 or 0474 683 544) Ghent and Brugge (call to confirm) June 5, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m., price \$40 adults, \$33 children; Paris June 12, 5 a.m.-11 p.m., price \$40 adults, \$33 children; Canterbury June 19, 5 a.m.-11 p.m., price \$45 adults, \$39 children.

Three Star Lounge (02/717-9822 or 9819) Karaoke Night June 11, 9 p.m.; FRG Family Night June 18, 8 p.m.; Movie Night with free popcorn every Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Multi-Craft Center (02/717-9629) Closed June 15-19 and June 22; cross-stitching classes

Wednesday afternoons, Saturday mornings or afternoons and Sunday afternoons; basic knitting classes Fridays at 10 a.m. and jewelry making classes Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Call for more info or to sign up.

Sports and Fitness (02/717-9667) Adult softball league registration through June 9. Season runs June 19-Aug. 21; Independence Day Celebration 5K Fun Run/Walk July 3 at 8 a.m., Teruren Park; Single Elimination Softball Tournament and Home Run Derby July 3, noon, at BAS. **Special Events (02/717-9639)** Volunteers needed for the annual Independence Day Celebration July 3 at BAS.

Child and Youth Services (02/717-9665) Summer Camp June 14-Aug. 13 - registration ongoing.

Library (02/717-9705) Story Time is back for 3-6 year olds every Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. New library hours: Monday, closed; Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 2-7 p.m.; Saturday,



Arrivals on time at Subway

A new Subway sandwich shop opened to an enthusiastic crowd May 6 in the PXtra on Chièvres Air Base. Hungry customers are braving daily long queues in anticipation of an alternative to burgers and pizza. Franck Tchibozo, left foreground, makes a sandwich May 11 for Jennifer Kramer, right foreground. Behind Tchibozo, coworker Martine Damoiseaux prepares a sandwich for Angela Tilley, behind Kramer. Next in line is Sgt. 1st Class Roscoe Carr, also waiting for a sandwich.

11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m.

Consignment Shop (02/717-

9724) Open Wednesdays and Fridays only June 1-Aug. 31, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

For more information about the Brussels community visit www.brussels.army.mil.

SHAPE and Chièvres Community Calendar

Blood drive - The Belgian Red Cross has a blood drive June 14, 9-11 a.m., in Hangar 4 on Chièvres Air Base commercial area. No appointment needed. Open to everybody. Info: Daniel Libre, DSN 361-5683.

Fitness instructors wanted - The Fitness Center on Chièvres Air Base seeks instructors. Info: 068 27-5506 or email ChievresActivityCenter@benelux.army.mil **The Welcoming Everyone to Belgium** center is an Army Community Service satellite office located in Hotel Maisières, open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-noon. The WEB is a resource center for newcomers as well as others who need information.

Sing patriotic tunes - SHAPE Entertainment Center seeks vocalists for the community Fourth of July Chorus. Rehearsals are Tues-

days and/or Thursdays, 6-7 p.m. Although the Fourth of July is an American National Day celebration, we invite all ages and nationalities to participate. Info: SHAPE Entertainment Centre, Building 207, DSN 423-3312.

EEO Counselors needed - 80th ASG Equal Employment Opportunity Office needs a minimum of five new EEO Counselors, who must be Department of the Army civilian employees. Duty is collateral. Info: Jacqueline Young, EEO Manager, DSN 361-5057 or 361-5281.

Entertainment update - Shape Entertainment Center presents "The Women" a play by Clare Boothe Luce. Performances are June 4-5 at 7.30 p.m. and June 6 at 3 p.m. Info: Jacqueline Collins, DSN 423-3312 or

civilian 065 44-3312; Salsa dance classes are every Monday, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the IC Club, sign up with Cesar and Salina;

Wood shop hours expand in June to Wednesday, 5:30-9 p.m.; Thursday, noon-9 p.m.; and Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Every Saturday in June, 10:30 a.m.-noon, required power tool orientation offered. This is a safety "must." Info: SHAPE Arts and Crafts Center, Building 209, DSN 423-4680.

Volley Ball Tourney June 20, time TBA, at Prime Time Lounge on Daumerie Caserne. Also, Country night June 5, Karaoke night June 10 and 24, 8.30 p.m., and Monty Carlo night June 26.

Rendezvous with the French language June 22, 10 a.m.-noon, at Hotel Maisieres. Info: Christine Genart, DSN 423-5324.

BOSS offers discount Euro tickets to Six Flags Belgium and the Netherlands. Tickets are valid at seven different parks. Save up to Euro 45. Info, DSN 366-6272.

Celebrate the Fourth - U.S. Independence Day Celebration on SHAPE, July 4, noon-11.30 p.m. Lots of entertainment, children's rides and children and adult programs. Fireworks start 11 p.m. We are still looking for groups and individuals that are interested in performing. If interested, call DSN 361-5589.

The Benelux Training Support Center has a **Combat Lifesaver Course** July 12-14 for personnel who conduct operations at the Indoor Firing Range in Building 105 on Chièvres Air Base. Info: Jo Trad, DSN 361-5238.

254th BSB Local Calendar

The 254th BSB **Youth Services baseball championship games** are June 11-13. Info: DSN 364-3595 or 31 45 526-3595.

Cruise with BOSS - Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers hosts a moonlight cruise on the Maas River June 19. Cost is Euro 35. Info: DSN 360-7236 or civilian 31 46 443-7236.

Local club off-limits - U.S. authorities have put the Koempel Club (K-Club) on Rumpenerstraat in Brunssum temporarily off-limits to all U.S. personnel in the Tri-border. Info: Tom Leugers, 31 46 443-7351.

Teen Center opens - The grand opening of Schinnen Teen Center is June 21, 10 a.m. The Teen Center is in the Sports Center and all registered Youth Services members in grades 9-12 are welcome. Info: 45 526-3595.

Parenting fair offers safety tips - The next Tri-border parenting fair is June 4, 10 a.m. at the rear of AFNorth International School library. The topic is "Safety Tips for the Summer."

Course offered at Chievres - A Team Building course is June 16-18 at Chievres. The course is de-

signed for supervisors, managers or employees who want to improve team performance and relationships. Info: 375-9837.

Club aids orphans in Afghanistan - *Project Afghanistan*, The American Spouses Club collects items for the International Orphan Car in Kabul. Drop off donations at the U.S. Thrift Shop at Schinnen or the U.K. Thrift Shop at AFNorth. *Food International Orphan Care*, Open to all students at AFNorth and Geilenkirchen. Kids should draw a picture of themselves with their favorite food. Pictures and a can/box of the favorite food should be taken to the Thrift Shop at Schinnen. Info: 046 443-7436.

Job available at Schinnen - *Directorate of Community Activities* has part time positions for *Child and Youth Program assistants* in the Child Development Center, School Age Services and Youth Services. Info: Benelux CPAC, 32 6827-5467 or visit Benelux.cpac@cpocur.army.mil; *254th BSB Morale, Welfare and Recreation* seeks a *Family Advocacy Program educator*, an *Exceptional Family Member Program* coor-

dinator, *Army Family Team Building coordinator* and an *Army Family Action Plan coordinator*. Info: DSN 360-7452; *Schinnen Commissary delicatessen section* has a job vacancy for American applicants. Info: stop by the commissary.

Shed pounds - TaeBo/aerobics classes are Monday-Thursday at Schinnen Sports Center, 6-7 p.m. Sign up at the Fitness Center. Info: 31 46 443-7561.

Check out the social scene - Join friends and colleagues at the Memories Lane social hour Fridays at 4 p.m.

News from the Bowling Center - Cosmic bowling Fridays, 6 p.m.; No Tap Tournaments Saturdays, 6 p.m., men 9 pins, women 8 pins, \$15 entry fee.

Support group meets - The New Parent Support Program Breastfeeding Support Group meets May 26, 10 - 11 a.m., ACS Conference Room, Building 39, Schinnen.

Schinnen Playgroup for Toddlers meets every Thursday, 9:30-11:30 a.m., at Schinnen Sports Center.

Free developmental screening

service for babies through three years of age. All American-sponsored families are eligible. Call Mary Jo Rooney at 45 563-6126.

Adult classes set - Unless otherwise indicated, classes are held in ACS Building 39 at Schinnen, 46 443-7500. *Labor and delivery tour of the Heerlen Hospital* June 14, noon - 3:30 p.m.; *New Parent Education infant massage class* June 15, 10 a.m.; *The Employment Readiness Program* has two workshops every Tuesday, "Finding Employment," 10 a.m.-noon, and "Hands on Resumix," 2-4 p.m. **New opening hours for the Value Added Tax (VAT) office** at the 254th BSB, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

News from Geilenkirchen

Unless otherwise indicated the following events and activities are sponsored by the Geilenkirchen American Family Support Center (FSC) and interested parties can call 49 2451 63-3791 to sign up or to get more information.

GK Clinic closes June 10, Corpus Christi Day.

Get ready to PCS - Looking to

get rid of unwanted "stuff"? Check out the Park and Sell behind the U.S. Post Office at GK, June 12, 10 a.m.-noon. Call Kim Gaines, 49 2451-2258, to secure a spot.

Obstetrics orientation/prenatal education class June 8, 10 a.m.-noon, GK Clinic conference room. Call 31 46 443-7335.

Survey aimed at improving healthcare - The GK U.S. Clinic is conducting a survey and asks for patient cooperation. The clinic will be calling 100 patients a week requesting patient feedback after appointment. The results are reviewed and used to improve healthcare at the facility.

CPR classes offered - The GK U.S. Clinic has two cardiopulmonary resuscitation classes held on the first and third Friday of the month. Classes on the first Fridays are for health care providers and the other is offered for the general population. Spouses may attend but will not be issued certification cards. Info: 49 2451 99-3343. All classes are held in the clinic training room.

Motorcycle training could save lives

21 May 2004

Bell Sends #20-04
SAFETY Alert
Motorcycle Safety

1. Two USAREUR Soldiers were recently involved in serious motorcycle crashes. One was critically injured when he ran into a wall. The other was killed in a head-on collision. The carnage continues. Indications are that both Soldiers were engaged in unsafe and dangerous motorcycle operations. Neither of these Soldiers had completed the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) training. This training is required by DOD, but we failed to ensure that these Soldiers met this critical requirement.

2. The Soldier who died was an experienced

rider, was wearing the proper safety equipment, and was not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. However, he was attempting to pass on a curve in a passing zone when he hit an oncoming vehicle. Accident investigators estimate that he was traveling over 100 miles per hour at the time, well over any reasonable passing speed for the type road being traveled.

3. We must do better in preventing tragedies such as these. I expect leaders at all levels to be personally involved in ensuring that motorcycle riders



Gen. B. B. Bell

in their units understand the foundation of motorcycle safety.

4. Soldiers who ride motorcycles must understand and accomplish the following:

- Complete MSF training, which consists of either the Basic Rider Course or the Experienced Rider Course (referred to as a "refresher class" in the Summer Safety Campaign).
- Review the motorcycle safety information on the USAREUR Safety Web site at [http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safety/newsafety/motor-](http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safety/newsafety/motorcycle/_private/motorcycle_survival_skills.htm)

[cycle/_private/motorcycle_survival_skills.htm](http://www.per.hqusareur.army.mil/services/safety/newsafety/motorcycle/_private/motorcycle_survival_skills.htm).

- Understand that the death rate for motorcyclists is 16 times higher than the death rate for occupants of other types of vehicles.
- 5. Ensure that this safety alert is given the widest possible distribution by forwarding it electronically and posting it on unit bulletin boards. Comply with its requirements. "No Loss of Life" is our goal.

B.B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

Shipment of plasma TVs can be problematic

PX stores across Europe display expensive plasma television receivers for sale. A plasma television generally costs \$2,500-5,000. Plasma televisions are not only expensive, but also delicate and sensitive. Something as simple as laying one flat or taking one to a high altitude, such as in an airplane, can break a plasma television.

Soldiers may not always realize how delicate and sensitive plasma televisions are. For example, when installing a plasma television for the first time, some dealers recommend you to allow the television to warm up to room temperature before turning it on. When transporting a plasma television, some manufacturers state plasma televisions provide detailed instructions to ensure safe shipping. These instructions can include costly, specialized crates

and temperature controls during transportation. Some manufacturers may even recommend a professional media technician install and uninstall these televisions.

When PCSing please inform the transportation office that you own a plasma television. Some carriers may choose not to ship plasma televisions because of the constraints concerning shipping these televisions. It is therefore strongly recommended that the owners keep the original manufacturer's container and have it available for the movers (if the movers want to use it.) If the owner does not have the manufacturer's original container, plasma televisions should be packed and shipped in a container that meets the manufacturer's or carrier's specifications.

In case a plasma television is damaged or lost during a

household goods shipment, the maximum allowable payment by the claims regulation is \$1,500. Since the risk of damage is significant for this type of television in shipment, the claims office highly recommends to plasma television owners to purchase full replacement value insurance or high value insurance for their television. This ensures the plasma television will be covered for loss and damage claims during a household goods move.

For further information concerning packing, shipping and storage of plasma televisions, please contact the Transportation Office at 80th Area Support Group, SHAPE, DSN 423-4461. For further information regarding claims, please contact the Claims Office at the Northern Law Center, SHAPE, DSN 423-4061.

Wine can be shipped Stateside with some preparation

HEIDELBERG – Many Americans start a wine collection while stationed in Europe and want to send it to the United States when their overseas tour ends. However, personnel need to be aware of recent changes in how the Department of the Army reimburses personnel on shipments of alcohol.

As in the past, personnel must find a local commercial exporter to ship their collection and comply with individual State and Internal Revenue Service rules, since alcohol cannot be shipped as part of household goods (HHGs) nor through the U.S. postal service.

Before, the Government reimbursed personnel for the entire cost of that separate shipment, but that has changed. The government will now only re-

imburse personnel up to the amount it would have cost to ship the same weight of HHGs with a government carrier.

To ship alcoholic beverages to the United States, follow these steps:

First ask the local Transportation Officer (TO) for permission to personally procure an alcohol shipment. Written permission from the TO is required when filing for reimbursement. You will be reimbursed for your shipment, but only as much as it would cost to ship the same weight of household goods with the Government carrier. For example, if you ship 300 pounds of wine, you will only be reimbursed for what it would have cost to ship 300 pounds of regular HHG by a government-contracted HHG carrier. This is the change from the old system, under which you would have been reimbursed for the full cost of the alcohol shipment. You should keep in mind that the new

reimbursement system most likely will not cover the entire cost of the shipment.

Once you have written permission from the TO, you can contact the alcohol control board for the state you intend to ship the collection to and ask for the conditions imposed on alcohol shipments; quoting the amount, type and cost of the alcohol. They will let you know the rules for importing alcohol and how to pay any tax that needs to be paid. Then, if the state authorities allow alcohol shipments, find a local merchant who ships alcohol collections internationally. Most Transportation Officers maintain a list of local companies that can perform this service.

When you arrive stateside, you need to go to the airport's cargo section with the shipping documents where you will be given additional paperwork to take to the Customs Office. Customs will work out the duty and

IRS tax and stamp the customs clearance. Then take your customs clearance back to the cargo section where the collection is released to you.

Customs officials report that the duty on still wine is now 8.4 cents per liter, but increases to 19.8 cents for sparkling wine. IRS tax depends on the alcoholic strength of the beverage concerned and works out to around six cents per liter for wine.

Follow these rules and you can continue to enjoy some of the best products of the Old World at your new stateside home for many years to come. Call a military customs office to find out more about shipping liquor products to the United States or consult the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms web site at www.atf.treas.gov/alcohol/info/persimp.htm. Links to state alcohol control boards can be found at www.hqusareur.army.mil/opm/state.htm.



Benelux Meteor Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date
June 7	June 18	July 12	July 23	Aug. 9	Aug. 20	Sept. 13	Sept. 24
June 28	July 9	July 26	Aug. 6	Aug. 30	Sept. 10	Sept. 27	Oct. 8

About Us



The *Benelux Meteor* is the authorized unofficial Army newspaper published under AR 360-1 for 80th Area Support Group personnel. Editorial content is provided by the 80th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office and the 254th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 80th Area Support Group. The *Meteor* is published twice per month. Circulation is 3,000. Our mailing address is Benelux Meteor, HQ 80th ASG, Unit 21419, Public Affairs Office, APO AE 09708. Telephone: DSN 361-5419; fax: DSN 361-5106; civilian telephone prefix: 068-27-5419. The country code for Belgium is 0032. Email address: meteor@benelux.army.mil

Policy

- We invite and encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request, but we will not print any anonymous letters.
- We reserve the right to edit letters to make them fit the allotted space, to remove libelous material and to correct grammar. Letters should contribute to the informational interest of the issue in question.
- Articles and photographs may be submitted for consideration but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor.
- Community-related event announcements must use civilian dates and times. Spell out acronyms initially and include a point of contact, telephone number and e-mail address.
- All submissions are subject to editing.

Advertising

- Messages from readers from profit and non-profit organizations which involve money exchange constitutes advertising.
- Neither the *Benelux Meteor* staff nor other public affairs personnel can accept advertising requests.
- The appearance of advertising, including inserts, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services offered. Everything advertised must be available for purchase, use or patronage, without discrimination.

- Any gambling or lottery requiring payment for chance cannot be advertised as stated in 18 U.S.C. 1302.

Deadline
Copy and photographs are due by noon 10 calendar days before publication date.

Commanders	
COL Timothy J. Quinn	80th Area Support Group
LTC Deborah P. Broughton	254th Base Support Battalion
LTC Jon M. Davis Jr.	NATO Support Activity
Public Affairs Officers and personnel	
Marie-Lise Baneton	80th Area Support Group
Susan Jackson	254th Base Support Battalion
Rick Haverinen	Editor
F. Neil Neeley	Writer
Sandy Aubrey	Writer

Memorial Day observed in the Benelux



PHOTOS: F. Neil Neeley

A Memorial Day ceremony was held May 30 at Flanders Field Military Cemetery in Waregem, West Flanders. Children from Waregem Elementary School sang the Star Spangled Banner as part of the ceremony and placed flowers on many of the graves. Soldiers from the Belgian Army fired a 21 gun salute. At right, veterans from the Sons of the American Legion Belgian Post 2 salute the fallen.

National Guard, Reserve Soldiers able to vote

Members of the National Guard and the Reserve components are subject to short-notice military orders that take them away from their voting residences. If the absence coincides with election days, the members should take steps to exercise their right to vote.

The member may be assigned temporarily away from his or her legal residence or may be in a situation where he or she cannot leave the duty station in order to vote.

As soon a Guard or Reserve member knows that he or she will be unable to vote in person at the polling place on election day, the member should contact the local election official (LEO), usually the town or county clerk, to determine the local process for requesting an absentee ballot.

Contact information for the LEO is available on the FVAP website at www.fvap.gov. Select "State Election Sites", and then select the state of voting residence. The member should explain the circumstances why he or she is unable to vote in person and provide a mailing address.

Some states also have special periods before election day during which citizens can go to specified locations and vote in person. It is important that the member make

arrangements in advance in order to either vote early or vote by absentee ballot. There are deadlines that must be met. The member must take into consideration mailing time. Absentee ballots must be received by the LEO by a specified time in order to be counted.

A Guard or Reserve member who has been activated or mobilized will follow absentee voting procedures covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). Documents are available on the FVAP website. Select "Voting Assistance Information". The member should submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)(SF-76), which serves simultaneously as registration and absentee ballot request, to their LEO. The FPCA is available from the unit or installation Voting Assistance Officer. Use the individual State instructions on chapter 3 of the 2004-05 Voting Assistance Guide when completing the FPCA. The FVAP website also contains state instructions.

The LEOs usually mail absentee ballots 45-30 days before the election. Again, the member should take mailing time into consideration.

Upon arriving they should enter the address and immediately mail the FPCA. Many states allow some form of electronic transmission of election materials, either the FPCA, the blank ballot, or in some cases, the voted ballot.

The member may also obtain the FPCA at their deployed station from the Installation or Unit VAO or may use the online FPCA (OFPCA). Download the OFPCA from the FVAP website by selecting On-line Federal Post Card Application. The member may also contact their LEO to determine what alternatives are available in order to receive, vote and return the absentee ballot on time. If assistance is not available at the deployed location, Guard and Reserve members may contact the FVAP.

What can be done if it is getting close to the election and the member has not yet received the absentee ballot? If a member is outside the U.S. or using an APO/FPO address and has requested but not received their state absentee ballot, he or she can use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) (SF-186) to cast their vote for candidates for Federal offices. See the Guide or State by State Instructions for requirements and additional details.

Springtime slides in

SHAPE American High School senior Kyle Kugler slides back to second base in a game May 21 versus the Montingy Cougars from Paris. SHAPE American High School hosted its annual baseball tournament May 21-22. Each team played two games May 21 and four teams out of five advanced to the semi-finals on May 22. In the first semi-final the Lions from St. John's in Brussels defeated the Trojans from American School of the Hague, 6-2. In the second semi-final, the SHAPE Spartans defeated the Raiders from International School of Brussels 4-3. During the championship game between St. John's and SHAPE, the Spartans kept their momentum from the earlier game with ISB and cruised to a 7-2 victory, winning the tournament for the first time since 2001.



PHOTO: Rick Haverinen

Belgium announces vehicle road tax information, new sticker

Starting January 1 next year the SHAPE Registration Office, located in Building 210, will no longer be dealing with payments of the annual road tax on vehicles, including trailers, caravans and motorcycles. This means that only the Belgian Federal Public Service (Finances) [hereafter abbreviated FPS(F)], formerly the Ministry of Finances, will be in charge of collecting the road tax due by SHAPE Members. One vehicle is exempt.

FPS (Finances) will from now on invite vehicle owners to pay the annual road tax by bank transfer.

The road tax already paid through the Registration Office will be taken into consideration and SHAPE members will receive the first document in a couple of months. As a first approach, the FPS(F) will keep the monthly system established by the Registration Office, which is based on the first letter of the last name. For instance, owners of vehicles, whose last name starts with a

"T", will receive the money order payment request in November 2005 and those starting with a "W" will receive it in December 2005.

Owners of trailers, motorcycles, and caravans will still be receiving this year (2004) payment orders related to the 2005 road tax.

As a transition period only in 2004, and in order to allow the FPS(F) to gather the required data, vehicle owners will be sent the document by the Registration Office as shown here. Either this document reads "Exemption" for only one vehicle owned by a member of SHAPE, or the amount already paid for second or subsequent vehicles.

Tear out the left part, with the large "04" and data referring to the vehicle, and display it permanently behind the windshield. Be sure it is firmly fixed.

Failing to display this document might

make SHAPE members liable to a Euro 50 fine and many administrative constraints.

If the document has not been received by this time, please contact the SHAPE Registration Office immediately, Building 210

Room 109 (Extension 5147/4148/3933). It is very important.

Should you have any question, feel free to contact the same office.

One vehicle is still exempt from road tax.

<p>912589 VOLVO - 740 VP Essence Verte</p> <p>EURO : EXEMPTION.</p> <p>01 Mai 2004 - 31 décembre 2004</p> <p>RECETTE MONS 1</p> <p>N° 3362160</p>	<p>To the owner of the vehicle which details appear on the left part of this document</p> <p>SFC John SMITH HSG - Registration Office. Section Building 210 - room 1008 7010 SHAPE BELGIUM. <u>If not distributed, to be returned to Registration Office.</u></p> <p>You MUST tear out the left part of the document and display it PERMANENTLY behind the windshield of your vehicle, as shown on the picture here above. Failing to do so may lead to a fine of 50 € minimum and additional administrative problems. Should you notice any discrepancies or shown information, do not hesitate to report to the Registration Office, building 210, Room 110.</p> <p>653</p>
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